



WHEN YOU COME to know what has preceded from the nullifiers [of Islam]¹ which render one’s deeds fruitless and makes the doer of such remain in Hell-Fire, then know that the Muslim may say or do something that, according to the Book, the Sunnah, and the consensus of the Salaf of this ummah, is kufr and apostasy from Islam, however, according to the people of knowledge there is a distinction between saying that this is kufr and between takfir of a specific individual. Thus not everyone who does a thing which is major kufr gets the ruling of kufr applied upon him. The saying or action may be kufr, but kufr is not generally applied upon every speaker or doer [of kufr] except with conditions. Because, it is necessary in regards to takfir to make certain the conditions are present and that the barriers are uplifted. A person may be new into Islam and not be aware that he did something that was kufr; so it is clarified for him. And he may reject something out of a mistaken interpretation, and so on from the barriers that prevent takfir.

This is an enormous principle. It is obligatory to understand it and give it the right amount of attention because takfir is not a right that belongs to the creation, so they make takfir on that which agrees with their whims. Rather, it is compulsory in this issue to return to the Book and the Sunnah upon the understanding of the Salaf as-Salih. As such, whoever Allah and His messenger make takfir of, and the hujjah is established upon him, then he is kafir; otherwise, than he is not.

In the two books of sahih ahadith, and other than them, from Abu Hurayrah (radiyallahu ‘anhu) from the Prophet (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) who said, “A man used to spend lavishly

on himself. And when he approached death he advised his children saying: ‘When I die, burn me and throw my ashes into the winds at the sea. By Allah, if Allah was to gain power over me, He will inflict me with a punishment that He has not inflicted upon anyone before me.’ Thus they did so. Then Allah said to the earth to collect his remains, and he was made to stand. Allah said to him: ‘What made you do that?’ The man said: ‘Fear of you, O my Lord.’ So he was forgiven due to that.” Shaykhul-Islam ibn Taymiyyah said in his collection of fatawa

So this man doubted in the power of Allah and that He would restore him if his remains were scattered. Rather, he believed that he would not be resurrected, and that is kufr by the agreement of the Muslimin. However, he was ignorant and was not aware of that. He was a believer who feared Allah would punish him, so he was forgiven due to that. And those who have an interpretation from the people of ijihad, but is keen to follow the Messenger (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) are more deserving of forgiveness than the likes of that person.²

And he said in *Masail al-Mardiniyyah* (p. 71), “The reality of the matter is that the saying, indeed, could be disbelief; so it is said in general that takfir is made of whoever pronounced it, such as saying: whoever says this or that is a kafir. But, the individual who says it is not ruled with kufr until the evidence is established upon him which he disbelieves by if he abandons it.”

In summary, the madhhab of the people of research and investigation is the distinction between takfir of the action and takfir of the doer. Similar to that is the matter of tabdi’ in that there is a difference between tabdi’³ of a statement or action and tabdi’ on the speaker or doer. So not everyone who does something that is a bid‘ah is a mubtadi’. Whoever looks into the

¹ The following is the appendix found in the six edition of his book *At-Tibyan Sharh Nawaqid al-Islam*.

² *Majmu’ al-Fatawa*, v. 3, p. 231

³ Declaring someone a mubtadi’ (innovator).



lives and biographies of the Salaf will realise the veracity of this and that this was their madhhab and path. You

notice what they were upon in regards to justice and equity and being keen to the guidance of the creation, as Allah bestowed upon them beneficial knowledge and righteous actions. And this is obligatory upon all of the creations: to have the intention to explain the truth and remove falsehood with justice and equity in order for the din, all of it, to be for Allah. And all praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of creation.

OUR COMMENT: Firstly, what the shaykh stated is correct without any doubt, and we know it is not needed for us to say that to add weight to it, but it is said so it is known we agree with it and have no objections to it. Secondly, the hadith of the man who told his family to burn should not be taken as a proof in order to excuse clear mushrikin and murtaddin. Shaykh 'Abdul-Latif Al ash-Shaykh stated

The hadith of the man who ordered his family to burn him was a muwahhid and not from the people of shirk. Indeed, it is established from the path of Abu Kamil from Hammad from Thabit from Abu Rafi' from Abu Hurayrah that, "He did not do any good at all except for tawhid." So that which they attempt to take as proof in this matter is void.⁴

Thirdly, the one who falls into kufr by principle is a kafir. Shaykhul-Islam ibn Taymiyyah said, "In general, whoever says or does something that which is kufr disbelieves by that, even if he did not intend to become a kafir. Because no one intends to disbelieve, except for what Allah wills."⁵ And what the scholars meant by the

above classification and saying that not everyone who does or says something that is kufr is a kafir unless the conditions are fulfilled, with the absence of any barriers, means, that the sabab or manat (reason) of kufr is not present for the person who did or said something that is kufr. Example: someone denies the obligation of hajj; this saying is kufr due to it being a rejection of clear texts stating that hajj is without a doubt obligatory, by consensus. However, one who is not aware of the text and denies a portion of the text (hajj here) has not fallen into kufr to begin with as he was ignorant of the text. And from the conditions of takfir is knowledge, likewise, from the barriers is ignorance.

Another example: someone misinterprets a text which in reality is a denial of the text, which is kufr. So someone (like ibn Hajr and an-Nawawi) misinterpret the ayat of Allah rising above His throne away from the actual and apparent meaning of the text. The one who denies that Allah is above His throne is a kafir for denying the clear text, but someone who misinterprets the text thinking he is exalting Allah far from His creation, is merely mistaken and his valid tawil (interpretation)⁶ prevents the reason of kufr (denial of the text) for the one who denies Allah is above His throne. Therefore, it is to be known that rejection and denial is of two types:

1. Rejecting that connotes and implies belying. The one who does it is a kafir specifically. So this one rejects and denies Allah rose above His throne or that Allah has hands, etc., this individual is a kafir by consensus.
2. Rejection that stems out of an

⁴ *Minhaj at-Ta'sis wat-Taqdis*, p. 218.

⁵ *As-Sarim al-Maslul*, v. 3, p. 176.

⁶ Valid tawil meaning it has some linguistic justification in the Arabic language.



interpretation of the text.
And this is also two types:

(a) When the interpretation has a type of linguistic justification. So he says about the hands of Allah that it means “favor”.

(b) When the interpretation has no basis in the language. Thus he says something like “Floating under Our eyes” means “under our lands”; this person is a kafir.

Therefore, with regards to scholars like ibn Hajr and an-Nawawi, you don’t say they fell into kufr but are excused due to their tawil; no, you say: they have not fallen into kufr in the first place due to their tawil. Because the only excuse for the one who falls into kufr is ikrah.

A third example: someone is not ignorant of the texts, does not make a valid tawil, and says or does something that is clear major kufr, but he was forced to say or do that which was kufr. He is not a kafir as long as he is not pleased with it and holds onto iman in his heart, due to His (ta‘ala) saying, “Whoever disbelieves in Allah after his iman, except for those who are forced...” This is so because him being forced indicates that he is not pleased with whatever he said or did, but if he indicates he is pleased, even if he is forced, then he is kafir. These are finer details that many neglect and it is important to make mention. As stated previously, the foundation is whoever falls into kufr is a kafir. Whereas today, with the spread of irja, the misguided deviants sought to establish the opposite: whoever falls into kufr is not a kafir and is excused!

And just as there is a distinction between kufr and takfir, there is a distinction between

those matters that are asl ad-din, apparent matters of the din, and obscure matters of the din. Each has its own conditions and barriers, with some not needing others to apply, and at times one falling into the category of the other and vice-versa. For a more in-depth analysis see the book *The Sharp Word Against the One Who Does Not Make Takfir of the Apostate*, particularly the endings of Nasir al-Fahd and ‘Ali al-Khudayr.⁷